

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2023WW003
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Name of Service:	Little Stars on the Lane
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Address of Service:	1 Seagreen Gate, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
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Eircode:	A63 C924
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Name of Registered Provider:	Ciara Watson, Kara Gargolinski McAlister
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Service type:	Full Day, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	14/03/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	28
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency First Floor Trinity Building IDA Business Park Southern Cross Road Bray Co. Wicklow
Inspection undertaken by:	H. Bourke
Title:	Early Years Inspector

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

This privately owned full day care service first opened in November 2023 and operates from a two storey, purpose build premises, located in the outskirts of Greystones in Co. Wicklow. There are two care rooms on the ground floor, each with its own sanitary accommodation, and an additional, standalone room is available should a child need personal space or quiet time. A disability toilet with nappy changing facilities is also available on the ground floor. On the first floor there is a staff room, office, laundry room, kitchen and staff sanitary accommodation. The service is registered to provide care and education for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age, on a full-time basis. The registered providers operate the full-time service in conjunction with a sessional Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) service for 38 weeks, but all children attend on a full-time basis. The service operates from 07.30am to 06.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There are a total of eight staff members who are currently employed in the service, this includes the person in charge, who is supernumerary and available to support staff when needed. All eight staff members were present on the day of inspection, the registered providers were also present. The registered providers are available to support in the care of the children attending the service if the need arises.

Methodology

Tusla’s Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation

- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was announced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings. Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered providers, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,*
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and*

(c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

(a) consideration of references from the person's past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,

(b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,

(c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and

(d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

Eight adults are employed in the service, and the registered providers were also present on the day of inspection. Ten files were reviewed.

(1)(a)

There was a person in charge of the service and there was a named staff member who was able to deputise as required.

(b)

The person in charge was on the premises at the time of arrival of the inspector and remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

Written references were available in respect of ten staff members.

(c)

Three year Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of ten staff members.

(d)

Police vetting was available for five adult who had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

(4)

Ten members of staff held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or had a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(d)

Police vetting was not available for two adult who had lived outside the State for a period of longer than six consecutive months since turning 18 years of age.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(d)

The first staff member has applied for international vetting but is currently not working in the service. The second staff member was able to demonstrate that she had not lived outside Ireland for more than six months since turning 18 years of age. Moving forward we will ensure that all international vetting is in place before retaining a new member of staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

(2)(d)

- Photographic documentation of international police vetting application form.
- Registered provider confirmed that the second staff member was only in the UK for three months and does not require International vetting.

Summary Comment

The documentation supplied with the CAPA response and the actions taken by the registered providers have addressed the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (2)(d). This will be reviewed on next inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)

The person in charge ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service at all times.

(2)

The correct adult/child ratio was maintained at all times. There were seven adults employed and present with twenty-eight children on the day of inspection.

(8)(a)

There were two adults on the premises at all times throughout the inspection, this was confirmed by the staff roster.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child

(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-

(b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(b)

The registered providers ensured that appropriate and suitable care practices were in place. Children were asked what activity they wished to pursue, and children's participation was encouraged in all activities throughout the morning. The transition between one activity and the next was smooth and unhurried. Positive reinforcement and one to one attention when required by staff, contributed to a pleasant environment for the children in the service.

The classrooms were laid out to reflect specific areas of interest and there was a large variety of toys and equipment to engage the interest and encourage the imaginative play of the children in the room. The pre-school rooms were bright and inviting and cosy areas were laid out in a way to encourage the children to use them.

The service provides all the food for the children attending the service. An outside catering company provide all hot meals and the pre-school make up the snacks. Any specific dietary and religious dietary requirements are catered for.

The children are offered breakfast, two snacks and two hot meals throughout their day. There was fresh drinking water available to the children. The mealtime was relaxed and observed to be a positive social experience for children as adults engaged with them helping when required and giving them ample time to finish their meals. Children who wore nappies had them changed regularly throughout the day and at other times when required. Adults were observed to interact attentively with young children during the nappy changing procedure. Older children were supported to use the toilet independently and were encouraged to wash their hands afterwards. Care practices by adults reflected families' personal preferences while ensuring that the needs of individual children were met.

Sleep routines were reflective of children's needs which promoted good habits around sleep. Safe sleep practices were adhered to, and children had heavy clothing and shoes removed before being settled to sleep on individual low-lying beds. If a child does not want to sleep or does not settle within a reasonable amount of time, they will be moved to the second pre-school room, to be with the other children who are not sleeping and are included in the current activities in the room.

Children were supported to be independent with looking after their belonging and in the tidy up process, all with adequate supervision. Childrens parents are spoken to on an individual basis at collection time.